DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 405 553 CS 012 741

AUTHOR Britt, Geraldine; Baker, Linda
TITLE Engaging Parents and Kindergartners in Reading through Class Lending Library. Instructional Resource No. 41.
INSTITUTION National Reading Research Center, Athens, GA.; National Reading Research Center, College Park, MD.
SPONS AGENCY Office of Educational Research and Improvement (ED), Washington, DC.
PUB DATE 97
CONTRACT 117A20007
NOTE 26p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Action Research; Classroom Research; *Enrichment Activities; Inner City; Instructional Materials; *Kindergarten; Parent Child Relationship; *Parent Participation; Primary Education; Program Descriptions; Program Effectiveness; *School Libraries; Supplementary Reading Materials; Urban Education
IDENTIFIERS Baltimore City Public Schools MD

ABSTRACT

An action research study described and evaluated a classroom lending library that was rich in developmentally appropriate literacy material and was designed to facilitate communication between the child's school and home. The kindergarten classroom was located in the southwestern area of Baltimore, Maryland. The children themselves staffed the classroom library, and parents were encouraged to read to their children at home. Fourteen families completed questionnaires, 4 families were interviewed, and 4 parents participated in a discussion group held at school. Results indicated that: (1) the lending library proved to be an exciting vehicle that fostered communication between the child's home and school; (2) parent involvement in a variety of activities increased; (3) the teacher had a more positive attitude. The teacher shared the results of the project with all faculty in the school, and the principal allocated funds for each classroom to establish its own lending library. (Contains nine references. Appendixes present parent and children questionnaires, and the results of parent and child discussion groups.) (RS)

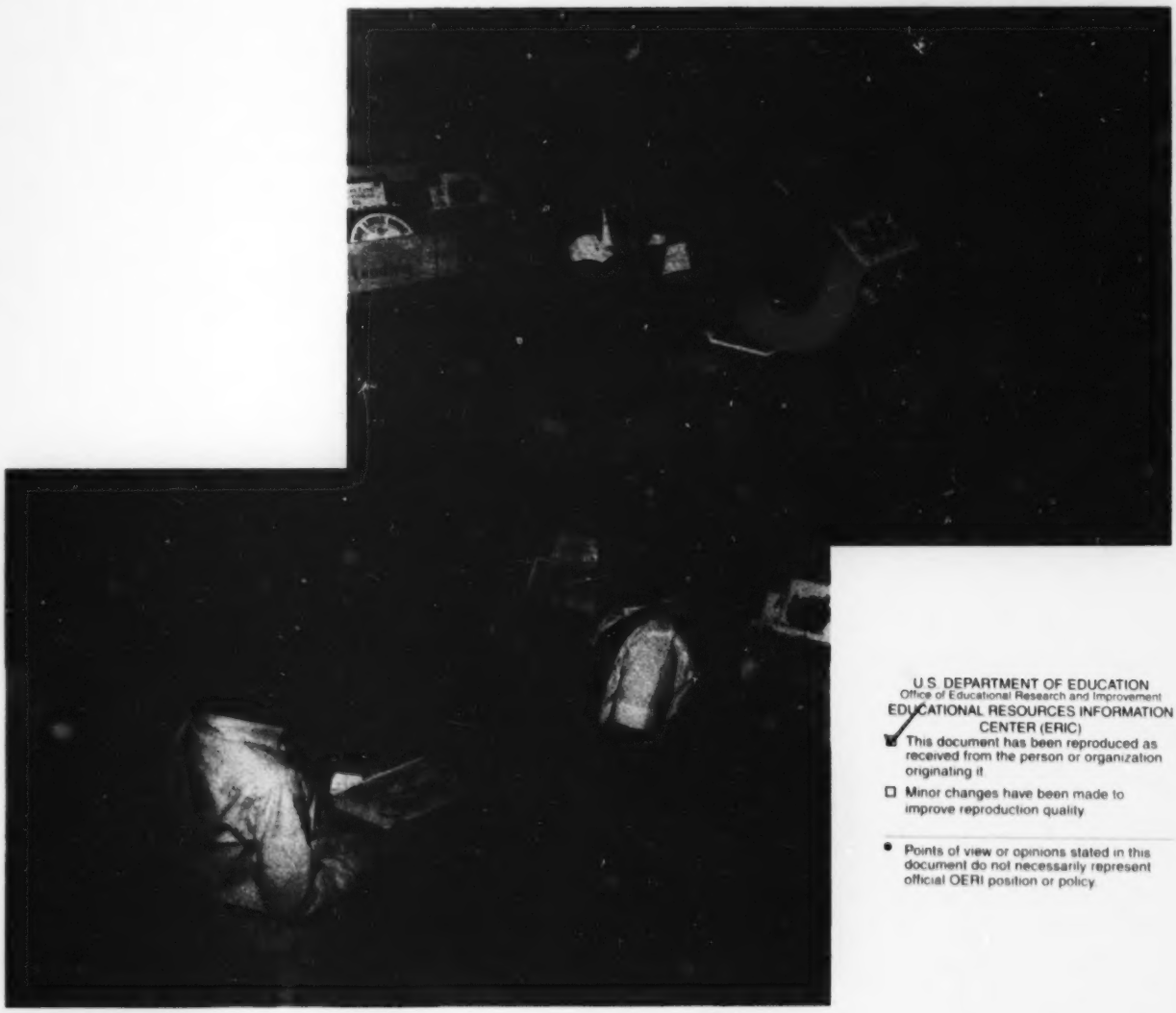
****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 405 553

Engaging Parents and Kindergartners in Reading Through Class Lending Library

Geraldine Britt
Bentalou Elementary School
Baltimore, Maryland

Linda Baker
University of Maryland, Baltimore County



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

CS012741

NRRC
National Reading Research Center

Instructional Resource No. 41
Winter 1997

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

NRRC

National Reading Research Center

Engaging Parents and Kindergartners in Reading Through a Class Lending Library

Geraldine Britt
Bentalou Elementary School

Linda Baker
University of Maryland Baltimore County

INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCE NO. 41
Winter 1997

The work reported herein is a National Reading Research Center Project of the University of Georgia and University of Maryland. It was supported under the Educational Research and Development Centers Program (PR/AWARD NO. 117A20007) as administered by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education. The findings and opinions expressed here do not necessarily reflect the position or policies of the National Reading Research Center, the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, or the U.S. Department of Education.

NRRC National Reading Research Center

Executive Committee
Donna E. Alvermann, Co-Director
University of Georgia
John T. Guthrie, Co-Director
University of Maryland College Park
James F. Baumann, Associate Director
University of Georgia
Patricia S. Koskinen, Associate Director
University of Maryland College Park
Jamie Lynn Metsala, Associate Director
University of Maryland College Park
Penny Oldfather
University of Georgia
John F. O'Flahavan
University of Maryland College Park
James V. Hoffman
University of Texas at Austin
Cynthia R. Hynd
University of Georgia
Robert Serpell
University of Maryland Baltimore County
Betty Shockley-Bisplinghoff
Clarke County School District, Athens, Georgia
Linda DeGroff
University of Georgia

Publications Editors

Research Reports and Perspectives
Linda DeGroff, Editor
University of Georgia
James V. Hoffman, Associate Editor
University of Texas at Austin
Mariam Jean Dreher, Associate Editor
University of Maryland College Park
Instructional Resources
Lee Galda, *University of Georgia*
Research Highlights
William G. Holliday
University of Maryland College Park
Policy Briefs
James V. Hoffman
University of Texas at Austin
Videos
Shawn M. Glynn, *University of Georgia*

NRRC Staff
Barbara F. Howard, Office Manager
Kathy B. Davis, Senior Secretary
University of Georgia

Barbara A. Neitzey, Administrative Assistant
Valerie Tyra, Accountant
University of Maryland College Park

National Advisory Board
Phyllis W. Aldrich
Saratoga Warren Board of Cooperative Educational Services, Saratoga Springs, New York
Arthur N. Applebee
State University of New York, Albany
Ronald S. Brandt
Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
Marshá T. DeLain
Delaware Department of Public Instruction
Carl A. Grant
University of Wisconsin-Madison
Barbara McCombs
Mid-Continent Regional Educational Laboratory (MCREL)
Luis C. Moll
University of Arizona
Carol M. Santa
School District No. 5
Kalispell, Montana
Anne P. Sweet
Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education
Louise Cherry Wilkinson
Rutgers University
Peter Winograd
University of Kentucky

Production Editor
Katherine P. Hutchison
University of Georgia

Assistant Production Editor
Jennifer Moon
University of Georgia

Dissemination Coordinator
Jordana E. Rich
University of Georgia

Text Formatter
Angela R. Wilson
University of Georgia

NRRC - University of Georgia
318 Aderhold
University of Georgia
Athens, Georgia 30602-7125
(706) 542-3674 Fax: (706) 542-3678
INTERNET: NRRC@uga.cc.uga.edu

NRRC - University of Maryland College Park
3216 J. M. Patterson Building
University of Maryland
College Park, Maryland 20742
(301) 405-8035 Fax: (301) 314-9625
INTERNET: NRRC@umail.umd.edu

About the National Reading Research Center

The National Reading Research Center (NRRC) is funded by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement of the U.S. Department of Education to conduct research on reading and reading instruction. The NRRC is operated by a consortium of the University of Georgia and the University of Maryland College Park in collaboration with researchers at several institutions nationwide.

The NRRC's mission is to discover and document those conditions in homes, schools, and communities that encourage children to become skilled, enthusiastic, lifelong readers. NRRC researchers are committed to advancing the development of instructional programs sensitive to the cognitive, sociocultural, and motivational factors that affect children's success in reading. NRRC researchers from a variety of disciplines conduct studies with teachers and students from widely diverse cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds in pre-kindergarten through grade 12 classrooms. Research projects deal with the influence of family and family-school interactions on the development of literacy; the interaction of sociocultural factors and motivation to read; the impact of literature-based reading programs on reading achievement; the effects of reading strategies instruction on comprehension and critical thinking in literature, science, and history; the influence of innovative group participation structures on motivation and learning; the potential of computer technology to enhance literacy; and the development of methods and standards for alternative literacy assessments.

The NRRC is further committed to the participation of teachers as full partners in its research. A better understanding of how teachers view the development of literacy, how they use knowledge from research, and how they approach change in the classroom is crucial to improving instruction. To further this understanding, the NRRC conducts school-based research in which teachers explore their own philosophical and pedagogical orientations and trace their professional growth.

Dissemination is an important feature of NRRC activities. Information on NRRC research appears in several formats. *Research Reports* communicate the results of original research or synthesize the findings of several lines of inquiry. They are written primarily for researchers studying various areas of reading and reading instruction. The *Perspective Series* presents a wide range of publications, from calls for research and commentary on research and practice to first-person accounts of experiences in schools. *Instructional Resources* include curriculum materials, instructional guides, and materials for professional growth, designed primarily for teachers.

For more information about the NRRC's research projects and other activities, or to have your name added to the mailing list, please contact:

Donna E. Alvermann, Co-Director
National Reading Research Center
318 Aderhold Hall
University of Georgia
Athens, GA 30602-7125
(706) 542-3674

John T. Guthrie, Co-Director
National Reading Research Center
3216 J. M. Patterson Building
University of Maryland
College Park, MD 20742
(301) 405-8035

NRRC Editorial Review Board

Peter Afflerbach
University of Maryland College Park

Jane Agee
University of Georgia

JoBeth Allen
University of Georgia

Janice F. Almasi
University of Buffalo–SUNY

Patty Anders
University of Arizona

Harriette Arrington
University of Kentucky

Marlia Banning
University of Utah

Jill Bartoli
Elizabethtown College

Eurydice Bauer
University of Georgia

Janet Benton
Bowling Green, Kentucky

Irene Blum
Pine Springs Elementary School
Falls Church, Virginia

David Bloome
Vanderbilt University

John Borkowski
Notre Dame University

Fenice Boyd
University of Georgia

Karen Bromley
Binghamton University

Martha Carr
University of Georgia

Suzanne Clewell
Montgomery County Public Schools
Rockville, Maryland

Joan Coley
Western Maryland College

Michelle Commeyras
University of Georgia

Linda Cooper
Shaker Heights City Schools
Shaker Heights, Ohio

Karen Costello
Connecticut Department of Education
Hartford, Connecticut

Jim Cunningham
Gibsonville, North Carolina

Karin Dahl
Ohio State University

Marcia Delany
Wilkes County Public Schools
Washington, Georgia

Lynne Diaz-Rico
California State University-San
Bernardino

Mark Dressman
New Mexico State University

Ann Duffy
University of Georgia

Ann Egan-Robertson
Amherst College

Jim Flood
San Diego State University

Dana Fox
University of Arizona

Linda Gambrell
University of Maryland College Park

Mary Graham
McLean, Virginia

Rachel Grant
University of Maryland College Park

Barbara Guzzetti
Arizona State University

Frances Hancock
Concordia College of Saint Paul,
Minnesota

Kathleen Heubach
Virginia Commonwealth University

Sally Hudson-Ross
University of Georgia

Cynthia Hynd
University of Georgia

Gay Ivey
University of Georgia

David Jardine
University of Calgary

Robert Jimenez
University of Oregon

Michelle Kelly
University of Utah

James King
University of South Florida

Kate Kirby
Georgia State University

Linda Labbo
University of Georgia

Michael Law
University of Georgia

Donald T. Leu
Syracuse University

Susan Lytle
University of Pennsylvania

Bert Mangino
Las Vegas, Nevada

Susan Mazzoni
Baltimore, Maryland

Ann Dacey McCann
University of Maryland College Park

Sarah McCarthey
University of Texas at Austin

Veda McClain
University of Georgia

Lisa McFalls
University of Georgia

Randy McGinnis
University of Maryland

Mike McKenna
Georgia Southern University

Barbara Michalove
Fourth Street Elementary School
Athens, Georgia

Elizabeth B. Moje
University of Utah

Lesley Morrow
Rutgers University

Bruce Murray
Auburn University

Susan Neuman
Temple University

John O'Flahavan
University of Maryland College Park

Marilyn Ohlhausen-McKinney
University of Nevada

Penny Oldfather
University of Georgia

Barbara M. Palmer
Mount Saint Mary's College

Stephen Phelps
Buffalo State College

Mike Pickle
Georgia Southern University

Amber T. Prince
Berry College

Gaoyin Qian
Lehman College–CUNY

Tom Reeves
University of Georgia

Lenore Ringler
New York University

Mary Roe
University of Delaware

Nadeen T. Ruiz
California State University-
Sacramento

Olivia Saracho
University of Maryland College Park

Paula Schwanenflugel
University of Georgia

Robert Serpell
University of Maryland Baltimore
County

Betty Shockley-Bisplinghoff
Barnett Shoals Elementary School
Athens, Georgia

Wayne H. Slater
University of Maryland College Park

Margaret Smith
Las Vegas, Nevada

Susan Sonnenschein
University of Maryland Baltimore
County

Bernard Spodek
University of Illinois

Bettie St. Pierre
University of Georgia

Steve Stahl
University of Georgia

Roger Stewart
Boise State University

Anne P. Sweet
Office of Educational Research
and Improvement

Louise Tomlinson
University of Georgia

Bruce VanSledright
University of Maryland College Park

Barbara Walker
Eastern Montana University–Billings

Louise Waynant
Prince George's County Schools
Upper Marlboro, Maryland

Dera Weaver
Athens Academy
Athens, Georgia

Jane West
Agnes Scott College

Renee Weisburg
Elkins Park, Pennsylvania

Allan Wigfield
University of Maryland College Park

Shelley Wong
University of Maryland College Park

Josephine Peyton Young
University of Georgia

Hallie Yopp
California State University

About the Authors

Geraldine Britt is a kindergarten teacher at Bentalou Elementary School in Baltimore. She received her B.A. from Towson State University in Maryland and completed Master's equivalency work at the same institution. Mrs. Britt has been teaching in the Baltimore City school system for 33 years and has taught all primary grades, K-3. She is interested in developing ways to build stronger connections between home and school to promote children's learning. Mrs. Britt may be contacted at Bentalou Elementary School, 220 N. Bentalou Street, Baltimore, MD 21223.

Linda Baker is a Professor of Psychology at the University of Maryland Baltimore County and a principal investigator at the National Reading Research Center. She received her Ph.D. from Rutgers University. Her current research focuses on the social and cultural contexts of children's early literacy development. She is also interested in the development of metacognition and comprehension monitoring. Dr. Baker may be contacted at the Department of Psychology, University of Maryland Baltimore County, 1000 Hilltop Circle, Baltimore, MD 21250.

Engaging Parents and Kindergartners in Reading through a Class Lending Library

Geraldine Britt
Bentalou Elementary School

Linda Baker
University of Maryland Baltimore County

National Reading Research Center
Universities of Georgia and Maryland
Instructional Resource No. 41
Winter 1997

Abstract. *As a kindergarten teacher with more than 30 years experience, I have long been aware of the importance of the home environment in young children's beginning reading and of the importance of good communication between parents and teachers. I was therefore eager to participate in an inservice seminar on these issues led by National Reading Research Center researchers Robert Serpell, Linda Baker, and Susan Sonnenschein (Serpell, Baker, Sonnenschein, Gorham, & Hill, 1996).*

During the 1995–96 school year I and several other Baltimore City prekindergarten and kindergarten teachers met regularly on Saturday mornings with the project staff at the University of Maryland Baltimore County. We read and discussed articles dealing with children's home literacy experiences (e.g., Baker, Serpell, & Sonnenschein, 1995; Goldenberg, Reese, & Gallimore, 1992; Heath, 1982), home-school connections (e.g., Comer, 1988; Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 1992; Shockley, 1993), and teacher inquiry (e.g., Jervis, Carr, Lockhart, & Rogers, 1996). I found the articles and group discussions stimulating, making me think in new ways about working with low-income families from diverse backgrounds. As part of the seminar, each teacher developed and conducted her own action research project aimed at promoting connections between home and school. We received guidance from the university staff and financial support to implement our projects. In this paper I describe my project and share my reactions to it.

Because research shows that children can benefit from regular opportunities to share books with friends and family members, and because I knew that many of the children at Bentalou Elementary School did not have such opportunities, I decided to create a classroom lending library that the children themselves would staff. I chose this approach because the library would be rich in accessible literacy material developmentally appropriate for five-year-olds, and it could serve to facilitate communication between the child's school and home.

The School and the Neighborhood

Bentalou Elementary School is a primary school, grades pre-K through second, which is located in the southwestern area of Baltimore's inner city. The surrounding neighborhood is populated by low-income, African-American families. On our A.M. kindergarten roll in 1995-96, we had 18 African Americans who lived in the community and 9 European Americans who were bused into our school. The 21 children in the P.M. class included 14 African Americans and 7 European Americans. The majority of the children at the school qualify for free lunch.

The availability of books at Bentalou, as at most of the city schools, is limited. There is a school library, but it is not well-stocked; there is no full-time librarian. Kindergarten children are allowed to take books from the library to their classrooms, but they are not allowed to bring them home. Individual classrooms do not have many books. I purchased books for students in my class from my own funds, and I relied heavily on a suburban public library from which I borrowed books for my students. The neighborhood public library is very small, and it is in a location that is so unsafe that teachers are not allowed to bring their students there. Many parents also do not visit the library out of safety concerns.

Establishing the Lending Library

I took several steps to stimulate parent and child interest in the lending library project before it began. First, I invited the librarian from the local public library to visit the class. She delighted the children by telling us a story, one that included student participation and props. The children filled out applications for library cards and received them shortly afterwards. Then I scheduled a parent visit to the library that was attended by twelve parents. The parents left the library better informed, and they seemed to have a more positive feeling about reading to children. Finally, I sent home a letter that introduced the lending library project to the parents, along with an article from the local newspaper that described a preschool literacy program in a nearby neighborhood that stressed the importance of parents reading to their children.

Our lending library was located on a long countertop in the back of the classroom. An open-book logo made out of yellow construction paper with the word "library" printed on it identified this area in our classroom. Behind the countertop was a bulletin board with a large book logo containing book jackets from our library books. Eight corrugated boxes housed the 100 paperback books that were purchased for $99 from the Scholastic Book Company. Each book had a number written on the front cover and on an index card where the title of the book was printed, which enabled the children to identify the books by numbers. The index card was placed in a paper pocket in the inside back cover of the book. A 2" x 3" white sticker was glued on the back cover to provide a space for a return date. I kept a master list of all of the titles of the books and added to this inventory as more books were added to the library.

Two tote trays held the date stamps, stamp pads, pencils, and evaluation forms. The evaluation forms were placed in each book so that they could be completed at home and

returned with the book. These evaluations helped in assessing which books the children enjoyed and why the children did or did not like a book. Students were allowed to keep a book for one week. However, many of the children returned their books in a few days and selected other ones.

When borrowing books, children printed their names on the index cards, and the child librarian placed the cards in a basket that held the cards until the books were returned. The librarian stamped a return date on the white sticker on the back of each book. When children returned a book, the librarian retrieved the index card with the number that corresponded with the book and stamped a return date next to the child's name on the card. The completed evaluation slip was placed in an envelope marked "For Teacher." A fresh evaluation slip and the index card were placed in the book's pocket, and the book was returned to the library for circulation.

Our library was open in the morning from 8:25 a.m. until 8:45 a.m. Because the children eat breakfast at school, their entrance into the classroom was staggered. This arrangement allowed small groups of children to visit the library without overcrowding. Children in the P.M. class entered the room at 11:30 a.m. and selected their books before going to the cafeteria for lunch.

Three children a week were selected to work in the library. They pinned on an open-book logo name tag with the word "Librarian" printed on it. Every child had the experience of being the librarian and lender of books. Children were enthusiastic about taking on this responsibility and showed pride in their competence. Even those children who were frequently late for school never arrived late on the days they were to be librarian.

One of the fathers who owned a video camera volunteered to come into the classroom and make a videotape of the lending library project. I began with a short introduction, and he then videotaped children in the lending library. He asked several of the children to describe their responsibilities as librarians, which they proudly did in front of the camera. He also videotaped a group of children talking with me about the books they read.

Questionnaires and Interviews with Parents and Children about Reading

Because I was interested in the parents' and children's thoughts about books and reading, I sent home brief questionnnaires to be completed and returned to school. I also invited several parents in for informal discussions with me, both individually and as a group. And I invited children to participate in a small-group discussion about the books they were reading. The questions were not directly focused on the lending library; rather, I took this as an opportunity to find out more about the children's home lives as recommended by Moll et al. (1992), Shockley (1993), and Sonnenschein, Baker, and Serpell (1995). I include the questions and responses in the appendices to this report for the benefit of teachers who might be interested in opening up home-school communication about reading using this approach.

Questionnaires. To keep my project manageable in scope, I sent home questionnaires only to parents of children in my A.M. class. Fourteen families completed the forms. Appen-

dix A lists the 14 questions asked on the parent questionnaire and a summary of the parents' responses. I included questions about how often parents read to their child, who else in the family reads to the child, what kinds of questions they ask their child, and how they could help their child become a better reader. Appendix B lists the nine questions asked on the children's questionnaire and a summary of their responses. I included questions about children's responses to storybook reading, reasons why reading is important, and what helps them become a good reader.

Parent interviews. I conducted a series of individual interviews with five parents, recording three on videotape and two on audiotape. The parents were asked to respond orally to the written parent questionnaire. Two of the parents who were selected had children who were having difficulty mastering kindergarten skills, and I wanted to know more about their home experiences so that I could design a program that would meet their individual needs. The other three parents came to school frequently, were very interested in storybook reading, and were particularly involved in their child's education. When being interviewed, the parents seemed to feel very comfortable. They were willing to talk about storybook reading in their home and often elaborated when giving answers to my questions. The information that I collected from these interviews corresponded with the information from the parent questionnaires, and the elaborations were particularly enlightening. For example, one mother told me that her child set up her own lending library at home:

> Her and her older sister set up little books. They have their own stamps. They have their dates that they write on it, and they get their dad to check books out. She hangs things up like its her lending library. And they have a little box that they keep everything in; she has her own stamps and everything. It's really cute, because when we did this in school she came home and set it up. She wanted to have her own lending library. I thought it was nice.

Parents' discussion group. Four parents participated in a discussion group held at school. Three of the parents also participated in the parent interviews and were eager to share their experiences and ideas with other parents. During this discussion I asked them to talk about a variety of issues, such as the importance of reading to children and how to develop children who like to read questions. Appendix C includes the questions and summaries of the parent responses. Only parents who wanted to respond to a particular question did so.

Children's discussion group. Many children volunteered to participate in a discussion about a book that had been read to them at home, but I thought a group of seven children would be ideal for this activity. Most of the children in this group had parents who participated in one or both of the interviews and discussion groups. This gave me a more controlled grouping so that I could gather information about the child's storybook experiences from the parent and the child. I used a series of five questions to guide this discussion, including specific questions about why the child liked the book that had been read to them and general questions about why it was important to read books. However, I asked each child all questions in turn and discovered that many of the children were repeating answers given by the

previous child. I realized too late that I should have encouraged a less-structured exchange of ideas. Appendix D includes the questions and the children's responses.

Responses to the Lending Library Project

The lending library inquiry project has reinforced many of the ideas that I have had about reading to children. It has also given me more direct knowledge about children's storybook reading experiences in the home and how their parents feel about reading to their children. This insight is helping me work with parents and children so that, together, we can develop a literacy program that will better meet children's needs.

The lending library proved to be an exciting vehicle that fostered communication between the child's home and school. Many parents in our neighborhood are not as involved as we would like them to be in their children's education. However, parents visited school more often because they wanted to see their child use the library, especially when it was their child's turn to serve as librarian. Instead of simply dropping children off at the door when school began, parents came into the classroom to guide their children in making book selections to bring home for shared reading. I often overheard discussions, for example, about what books younger siblings might like. Parents talked with me more because the library created a point of contact that was nonthreatening and interesting for both them and their children.

But the rich interaction that was taking place transcended the lending library; the rapport between parents, children, and school improved in areas other than the library. I observed increased participation on class trips, parties, assemblies for perfect attendance, and year-end closing activities. I also experienced much more parent involvement in the day-to-day activities in the classroom, such as checking homework, assisting children with difficult skills, and giving additional encouragement or assistance to those children in need. Children who see their parents and other parents participating in their education are likely to develop a more positive attitude toward learning and view school as a very important place.

Involving parents more closely in their children's education fostered a group cohesion that motivated a culminating activity sponsored by both A.M. and P.M. parents. During the last week of school, the parents put on a group surprise luncheon that they had worked on for weeks. All children and parents were invited to participate in this closing activity. I felt more appreciated than in many years before.

I too had a more positive attitude. When a parent came in with a suggestion or a complaint, I tried to view the concern from the parent's and child's perspective as well as my own. I had more patience because I had so much emotional and physical support. I was enjoying my job; this feeling of joy motivated me to teach. I invited the parents to school to view the lending library video and served refreshments to the parents and children. We shared comments about the delightful activities of the children in the video.

One of my goals in creating the classroom lending library was to motivate parents and children to make more use of the neighborhood public library. To my disappointment, I found that this did not occur, in part because of safety

concerns. This shows just how important it is to have books available to inner-city families in a safe environment, such as that created in my classroom.

Teachers who set up classroom lending libraries such as the one I created need to expect some loss of books. Out of an inventory of 118 books, 20 were not returned. However, the benefits of the project far outweighed the loss. I felt this project was so successful that I shared it with all members of the faculty at my school. To my delight, the principal allocated funds for each classroom to establish its own lending library.

References

Baker, L., Serpell, R., & Sonnenschein, S. (1995). Opportunities for literacy learning in the homes of urban preschoolers. In L. M. Morrow (Ed.), *Family Literacy: Connections in schools and communities* (pp. 236–252). Newark, DE: IRA.

Comer, J. P. (1988). Educating poor minority children. *Scientific American, 259*, 42–48.

Goldenberg, C., Reese, L., & Gallimore, R. (1992). Effects of literacy materials from school on Latino children's home experiences and early reading achievement. *American Journal of Education, 100*, 497–536.

Heath, S. B. (1982). What no bedtime story means: Narrative skills at home and school. *Language and Society, 11*, 49–76.

Jervis, K., Carr, E., Lockhart, P., & Rogers, J. (1996). Multiple entries into inquiry: Dissolving the boundaries between research and teaching. In L. Baker, P. Afflerbach, & D. Reinking (Eds.), *Developing engaged readers in school and home communities*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Moll, L. C., Amanti, C., Neff, D., & Gonzalez, N. (1992). Funds of knowledge for teaching: Using a qualitative approach to connect homes and classrooms. *Theory into Practice, 31*, 132–141.

Serpell, R., Baker, L., Sonnenschein, S., Gorham, L., & Hill, S. (1997). *Cooperative communication among parents and teachers about children's emergent literacy*. (Final project report.) Athens, GA: NRRC, Universities of Georgia and Maryland College Park.

Shockley, B. (1993). Extending the literate community: Reading and writing with families. *The New Advocate, 6*, 11–24.

Sonnenschein, S., Baker, L., & Serpell, R. (1995). *Documenting the child's everyday home experiences: The ecological inventory as a resource for teachers*. (Instructional Resource 11.) Athens GA: NRRC, Universities of Georgia and Maryland College Park.

Appendix A

Parents' Questionnaire

The Parents' Questionnaire: The Questions and a Summary of the Responses

(The numbers following the responses indicate the numbers of parents who gave each response.)

1. Who initiated the reading?
   Parent: 5
   Child: 9

2. How long was the reading session?
   10–20 minutes: 11
   30 minutes: 2
   1 hour: 1

3. Why did your child select this book?
   Pictures: 3
   Enjoyed the subject matter: 3
   Interest in that particular book: 4
   Received book as a gift: 1
   No response: 3

4. Did your child like the book? Why or why not?
   Yes: 14
   No: 0
   (Each child gave a reason for enjoying the book.)

5. Did your child want the book read again?
   Yes: 12
   No: 2

6. How often do you read to your child? Daily, weekly, two or more days a week?
   Daily: 7
   Weekly: 3
   Two or more days a week: 4

7. Who else in the family will read to your child?
   siblings: 5
   grandparents: 4
   fathers: 5
   extended family members (aunts, uncles): 3
   boyfriend: 1
   no one else: 1
   no response: 1

8. What comments did your child make about the book?
   Reacted positively to the subject matter: 12

No response: 2

9. What kind of questions do you ask your child after reading the story? List two questions.
   Yes/no questions: 8
   What was the favorite part of the story: 3
   Why and what questions: 1
   No response: 2

10. What kind of things did you, the parent, like about the book?
   Various postive comments: 11
   Did not like the book: 1
   No response: 2

11. Was the reading/sharing time enjoyable? Why or why not?
   Yes: 11
   No: 2
   No response: 1
   (The responses to the follow-up question were varied. Many focused on the close physical contact.)

12. Do you think reading is important? Why or why not?
   Yes: 14
   No: 0
   Learning and knowledge was gained by reading: 10
   Reading leads to a successful future: 2
   No responses: 2

13. What will your child need to be a good reader? (Response choices were provided.)
   a good environment: 9
   a good community: 4
   a teacher who reads: 9
   a teacher who provides activities that encourage reading: 14
   a home with reading material: 11
   a family that likes to read: 11
   someone that will listen: 12

14. List ways in which you can help your child become a reader?
   increase the frequency of reading: 7
   the parent should be a teacher and helper: 8
   encourage the child to read to the parent: 6
   have books, magazines, and newspapers available in the home: 1
   one can learn: 1
   no response: 2

Appendix B

Children's Questionnaire

The Children's Questionnaire: The Questions and a Summary of the Responses

(Parents were asked to read the questions to their child and write down their responses as accurately as possible. The numbers following the responses indicate the number of children who gave each response.)

1. Why did you select this book?
   - already familiar with the book: 8
   - interest in the pictures: 4
   - interest in the subject matter: 2

2. Did you like the book? What part of the story did you like or didn't like?
   - Yes: 14
   - No: 0
   - identified specific events that they liked in the story: 12
   - liked the part she could read by herself: 1

3. Who read the story to you?
   - mother: 9
   - grandmother: 1
   - grandfather: 1
   - sister-in-law: 1
   - neighbor: 1
   - child read by self: 1

4. How often do you want someone to read to you?
   - daily: 10
   - three days a week: 1
   - twice a week: 1
   - every week: 1
   - every six months: 1

5. Do you like books? Why? Why not?
   - Yes: 14
   - liked the stories: 5
   - reading was fun: 3
   - reading teaches us how to read: 1
   - stories are good: 4
   - you learn many things: 1

6. What is your favorite story?
   - Disney books: 8
   - Dr. Suess: 2
   - Other: 4

7. When is your favorite story reading time?

bedtime: 12
after school: 2

8. Do you think reading is important? Why or why not?
   Yes: 14
   No: 0
   you learn when you read: 7
   you become a good listener: 1
   you couldn't get a good job if you didn't know how to read: 1
   reading is fun: 1
   no response: 4

9. What helps you to be a good reader?
   learning words: 4
   school and family members: 4
   being a good listener: 1
   having books read to you at home: 1
   practicing every day: 3
   no response: 2

Appendix C

Parents' Discussion Group

Parents' Discussion Group: Questions and a Summary of the Responses

1. What do you want to say to other parents about the importance of reading to their children? How often?

   Two parents reported that a child gets the feel of the book, becomes familiar with it, and learns the vocabulary. Two parents stated that one should read while the child is young and read often.

2. What types of material do you read? What effect does this have on your child?

   All five parents responded by reporting suspense novels, biographies, fiction, mysteries, and children's books. When a parent reads, it has a good effect on the children; they see you learning.

3. Where do you read with your child? Where does your child read?

   Parents read with their children on the bus and they read street signs as they walk.

4. How do you encourage a child to read?

   Parents encourage a child to read by buying books, magazines, viewing the learning channels, and educational shows on T.V.

5. Is going to the library important? Why? Do you visit the library?

   Parents stated that they had reading material in the home and only go to the library occasionally.

6. How do you express a positive attitude towards reading?

   This question was not easily understood by the parents. One parent responded that when a child sounds out the words, the mother or older sibling tries to help.

7. How much T.V. time should a five or six year old child have?

   During school days, allow a child to select his choice of programming for one hour. On Saturdays, the parents allowed their children to watch T.V. without giving a limit.

8. How much time should your child have looking at videos? What kind of videos?

   The parents did not give a time limit on viewing but stated that Disney, learning, and teaching videos were good ones to watch.

9. If you could write a recipe for developing a child who likes to read, what would it be?

   The parents gave these responses:

   1. Be patient.
   2. Have many books in the home.
   3. Have different types (pop-up, shape, etc.) of books.
   4. Encourage your child to read.
   5. Make time for reading.
   6. Sit together and treasure this time to be close. You will have positive feelings.

10. What goals do you have for your child?

The parents reported:

1. Get the most out of an education.
2. Don't give up.
3. See your goal as a challenge.
4. Hopefully, my child will go to college.
5. See what goals the children set for themselves. Children's goals change as they grow older.

Appendix D

Children's Discussion Group

Children's Discussion Group: Questions and a Summary of the Responses

1. What is the name of your book?
   All of the students, except one, were able to tell the title of the book.

2. Why did you like the book?
   Identified specific events: 4
   Liked the pictures: 1

3. Who reads to you?
   The mother was the main story reader.

4. Where did you read this book?
   The readings took place in various rooms in the house.

5. Why is it important to read books?
   Reading makes you smart: 1
   You can learn words and when you grow up you can read books: 1
   When you read you become a better reader: 1
   Your boss will want you to read on your job: 1

NRRC National Reading Research Center

318 Aderhold, University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia 30602-7125
3216 J.M. Patterson Building, University of Maryland, College Park, MD 20742